FWIS 153: Freshman Writing Intensive Seminar
"The Lewis and Clark Expedition"

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:25–10:45 AM

Instructor: Prof. John B. Boles, Fondren 502, boles@rice.edu. I am in my office most days from 8:00 to 5:30 and welcome drop-in visitors, but I suggest making an appointment in advance to make sure I'm not in another class, attending a meeting, or having coffee at Brochstein Pavilion.
Graduate assistant: Hannah Biggs (Hannah.biggs@rice.edu); make appointments in advance.

Course Description: Thomas Jefferson had a long fascination with the West and its geology, flora and fauna, and the Native Americans who lived there. In 1803 he persuaded Congress to fund an exploratory party to travel up the Missouri River to its headwaters and from there across what he termed the Stony Mountains all the way to the Pacific and back again, reporting on every aspect of what they encountered. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were chosen to lead the "Corps of Discovery," and setting out from St. Louis in the spring of 1804, the party spent almost three years performing their duty. Their journals record their encounters with many Native Americans—the results were pioneering ethnographic accounts—and graphic descriptions of animals, plants, and geological formations never before seen by Europeans. The men overcame tremendous hardships, traversed extremely hostile terrain, lovingly described animals as diverse as prairie dogs and grizzly bears, suffered hunger, cold, hail storms, and met a variety of very diverse Indian nations, ranging from the Mandans in South Dakota to the Shoshone and the Nez Percé in Idaho to the Chinook in Oregon. They had to learn to eat foods never imagined, self-medicate themselves, overcome obstacles that stagger the imagination. All this they describe in vivid language in their journals, now capably edited and available both online and in paperback book form. The course will require the students to read carefully three volumes of the journals, beginning with the 1804-1805 winter with the Mandans, the terrible portage around the great falls of the Missouri River, the dramatic rendezvous with the Shoshone Indians, and near starvation along the Lolo Trail in Idaho. Students will examine how the men of the Corps of Discovery comprehended what they encountered: the vastness of the prairies, the dozens of new animals, the utter strangeness Indian cultures, the disciplinary and leadership problems of keeping their group intact and motivated through three long years. They will consider the geology of the often mountainous terrain they crossed, examine their diet and medical treatment, analyze their engagement with Indians, interpret their relationships with and the role of Sacajawea (and her baby son, born on the trip), wonder about how the men dealt with fatigue, homesickness, and worry. This trip of exploration is unique within American history, and the men kept remarkably extensive written records of their adventure. At various points in the course we will watch portions of the Ken Burns film, "Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery."

Goals of a Freshman Writing Intensive Seminar: *In this particular class*, we will read, discuss, and analyze three volumes of the journals produced by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The readings will be approached not only for what information they provide about a portion of the American West, its human inhabitants, and the flora, fauna, and geology the Corps of Discovery encountered, but also with a spirit of critical inquiry about what motivated their writing, what preconceptions shaped their observations, what amazed or intrigued them. *The goals of the FWIS program as a whole are*:
By taking an FWIS course, including this one, students will: 1) Enhance their understanding of the central place of writing and communication in the learning process and in academic life; 2) Learn

strategies for analyzing, synthesizing, organizing, and responding to college-level readings; 3) Improve their ability to communicate correctly and effectively in writing and in speech, taking into account their audience and purpose; 4) Become comfortable with writing as a process and learn strategies—for instance, prewriting, outlining, revision—for working through their ideas; 5) Learn appropriate use of the work of others and, where necessary, specific practices of citation; and 6) Learn to articulate oral arguments and to respond productively to arguments of others in formal presentations and in class discussion.

Format: The seminar is based on discussion of the journals we are reading; therefore, readings assigned for each class meeting are to be completed in full BEFORE that meeting. The success of the class depends on active participation by each student in the discussions. You should attend and be prepared to participate in each session. On the days clearly noted in the syllabus where we will be discussing a portion of their journals, bring the appropriate volume to class. (A pattern of missing class or being unprepared to participate will be detrimental to the participation portion of your grade.) You will do a substantial amount of writing. The first paper will be a short (3-page) autobiographical assignment about a trip you have taken; this paper is intended to provide your instructors with a quick assessment of your writing proficiency. Then there will be two 5-page papers based upon the journals, plus a final paper of 10–12 pages, and there will be two 1-page reflection papers on very precise aspects of the journals. There will be a 5-minute oral presentation, then later a 10-minute oral presentations. All these writing and oral assignments are intended to be cumulative, helping you prepare the final longer paper.

Readings: You must purchase and read three specific volumes (in paperback) of the journals of the expedition. The bookstore has been requested to order them for you. Use only this edition of their writings: Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Definitive Journals of Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987–1988), vols. 3, 4, and 5. Do not buy the electronic version; you need to have the paper volumes so you can underline, make notes, etc. If you want an account of their entire journey for background information, I recommend the popular bestseller by Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997).

Grading: While class participation and attendance will be important and will represent a portion of the grade, the final grade will primarily be determined by the quality of your writing, which should show improvement over the course of the semester.
Class participation: 5 percent
First paper (3 pages): 5 percent
Second paper (5 pages): 15 percent
Third paper (5 pages): 15 percent
First Reflection (1 page): 5 percent
Second Reflection (1 page): 5 percent
5-minute oral presentation: 5 percent
10-minute oral presentation: 10 percent
final paper (10–12 pages): 35 percent

Students with disabilities: Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with course instructors during the first two weeks of class. All

discussions will of course remain confidential. Students with disabilities should also contact Disability Support Services in the Allen Center, first floor.

The Center for Written, Oral, and Visual Communication: You are encouraged to make appointments with the peer consultants at the Center for Written, Oral, and Visual Communication (on the second floor of Fondren Library). These consultants do not proofread or edit your work, but they will provide feedback on topics such as the organization of your paper or presentation, the coherence of your argument, appropriate sentence structure, and consistent grammatical errors. You can make an appointment at the Center's website: cwovc.rice.edu

Honor Code: All written assignments are covered by the Rice Honor Code, explained in the Student Handbook. Basically, plagiarism is using anyone else's work without acknowledgement. This includes, but is not limited to, failing to cite when copying or closely rephrasing from online or elsewhere, omitting quotation marks around a quotation, giving incorrect information about the source of a quote, failing to cite when using another's ideas or concepts from online or elsewhere, or turning in any portion of someone else's work as your own. **Note:** One of the purposes of this class is to teach students the rules of paraphrasing and scholarly attribution. Accordingly, FWIS instructors will take an educational approach to transgressions of these rules and respond to initial errors in these areas as primarily issues for grading and opportunities to correct errors, rather than as instances of academic dishonest. In other words, such transgressions will be treated as teaching moments rather than punitive infractions. But your instructors retain the authority at all times to treat instances of repeat or egregious violations as matters for the attention of the Rice Honor Council.

Rewriting Papers: Students must revise and resubmit one of the 5-papers and may revise and resubmit both if they desire. Revision must be substantial. The initial version of the paper will be graded, as will the revised version, with the ultimate grade being the average of the two. You are urged to meet with either one of your instructors to discuss in advance your final paper, but there will normally not be sufficient time to revise and rewrite it.

Essential Resources for Writing: The best-known and most authoritative guide to grammar is the *Chicago Manual of Style*, available via chicagomanualofstyle.org. Access also available through the library website (library.rice.edu). Search term, "CMS," under "Chicago Manual of Style," click on "online access." The preferred dictionary is *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, most recent edition. If you plan a humanities or social science major, you might want to purchase paper versions of these two standard reference volumes.

Class Syllabus:

January 9: Introduction to the Course and the Expedition; Introduction of Class Members
11: Jefferson's Interest in the West
16: Jefferson's Letter of Instruction to Lewis
18: Basic Rules for Writing: Introductions and Conclusions, Thesis and Transition Sentences, Avoiding Common Mistakes
23: Continued, Basic Rules for Writing; **a 3-page Paper is Due Today on Your Most Notable Trip.** *How did you prepare for the trip?*

Were you surprised, pleased, or disappointed by what you saw and experienced? What did you learn? Would you do anything different if you repeated the trip?

25: Background on the Corps of Discovery **Start Reading the *Journals of Lewis and Clark* (*JLC*), vol. 3, pp. 111–201.**

30: Anglo-Americans' Perceptions of Native Americans

February 1: Writing with economy and precision

6: Analytical Writing **Finish *JLC*, vol. 3, pp. 203–332.**

8: SPRING RECESS

13: Guest presentation: Avoiding Plagiarism. Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Effective Use of Quotations.

15: The Corps of Discovery: Leadership, Variety of Skills, What They See and Don't See

20: Class Discussion of Selected Portions of Their Journals. **5-page Paper Due: "Lewis and Clark Among the Mandan Indians"**

22: In-class Editing of a Document **Begin Reading JLC,vol. 4; finish before March 24.**

27: The Expedition Across Montana

March 1: Footnote Styles; Constructing a Bibliography. **Turn in a 1-page "Reflection" on pp. 323–62 of *JLC*, vol. 4.** *Why do you think the men did not rebel against such hardships? What kept them going? The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate your analytical abilities.*

6: Workshop on Presentation Skills

8: 5-minute Oral Presentations on Some Aspect of the Corps's Journey. *The assignments for today and tomorrow are intended to help you prepare the paper due on March 24.*

13: SPRING BREAK

15: SPRING BREAK

20: Continued, 5-minute Oral Presentations

22: The Expedition through Idaho and Oregon; **5-page Paper Due on some Aspect of The Lewis and Clark Journey. I will hand out a list of possible topics.**

27: Begin Reading *JLC*, vol. 5; Finish Before April 16.

29: Class Discussion of Selected Portions of Their Journals

April 3: L&C: "We Proceeded On": All the Way to the Pacific. **Turn in a 1-page "Reflection" on pp. 201–23 of *JLC*, vol. 5.** *Do you read any subtle differences between how Lewis and Clark relate this terrible portion of their journey, or do you find more notable the degree to which they agree? The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate your skill at close reading of a text.*

5: Students Workshop Their Ideas about Their Final Paper: Bring Ideas, Examples; Suggest How They Plan to Organize/Outline Final Paper.

10: NO CLASS

12: 10-minute Oral Presentations on a Critical Moment of the Expedition

17: Continued, 10-minute Oral Presentations

19: The Journey Home and The Disappointing Final Chapter of the Corps of Discovery

May 1: **By 5:00 PM Turn in a 10-to-12-page Paper on the Topic: "The Corps of Discovery: The Adventure of a Lifetime."** *Write about and interpret what you think are the most remarkable, even amazing, aspects of this long exploratory journey of mostly young men and one young woman and mother. How did they do it? It just seems to have been too difficult, too dangerous, for them to have succeeded without any casualties. Was it the result of their leadership, skill, dedication, luck, or some combination of all these factors?*